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Title: Need to accord the status of classical language to Kannada.

SHRI M. SHIVANNA (CHAMRAJANAGAR) : Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Union Government through you to confer classical language status to Kannada language.

Sir, Kannada language has a long history of over 2000 years and has bagged 7 Jnanapeeth awards, the highest award for literature in the country. People of Karnataka have been persistently demanding for the classical language status to be accorded to the Kannada language for the last 4 years. Agitations and demonstrations are taking place throughout the state. Six and a half crore Kannadigas are demanding the status of 'Classical language' for Kannada.

I have already raised this issue on many occasions in this August House. Both our Chief Minister of Karnataka Shri H.D.Kumara Swamy and Minister for Culture Shri H.S.Mahadeva Prasad have met the Hon. Prime Minister, Minister for Culture and H.R.D. Minister and submitted a memorandum in this regard. The Government of Karnataka have furnished all the necessary details including a book containing one lakh signatures of Kannadigas in order to support the demand for classical language status of Kannada language.

But it is a matter of great concern that the Government of India have not taken any concrete step and making unnecessary delay without expediting the matter. This year the Government of Karnataka is celebrating the 'SUVARNA KARNATAKA YEAR'. Therefore I urge upon the Government to accord classical language status to Kannada on or language before 1st November 2007.

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*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Kannada.